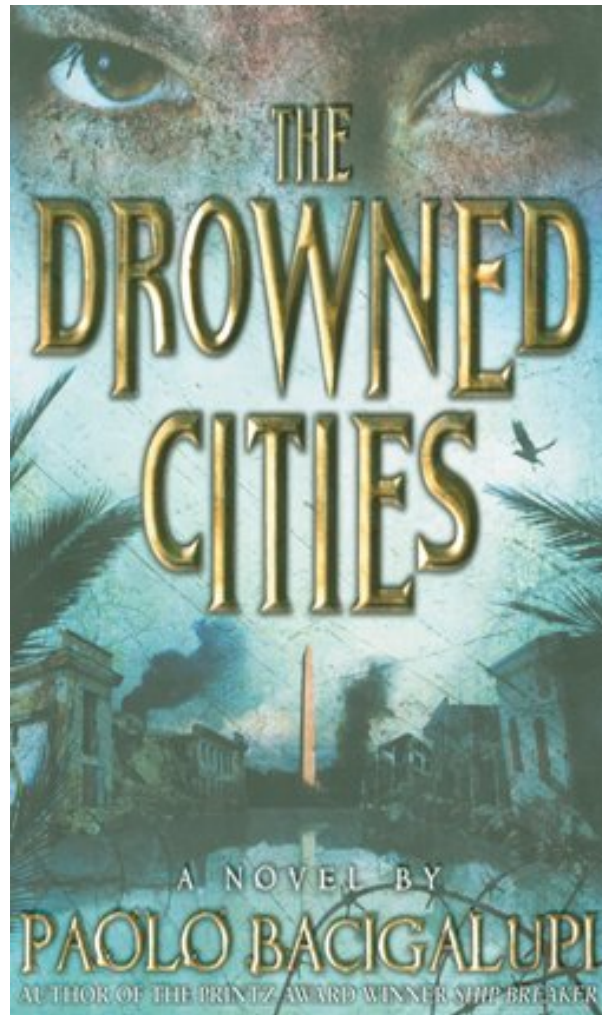
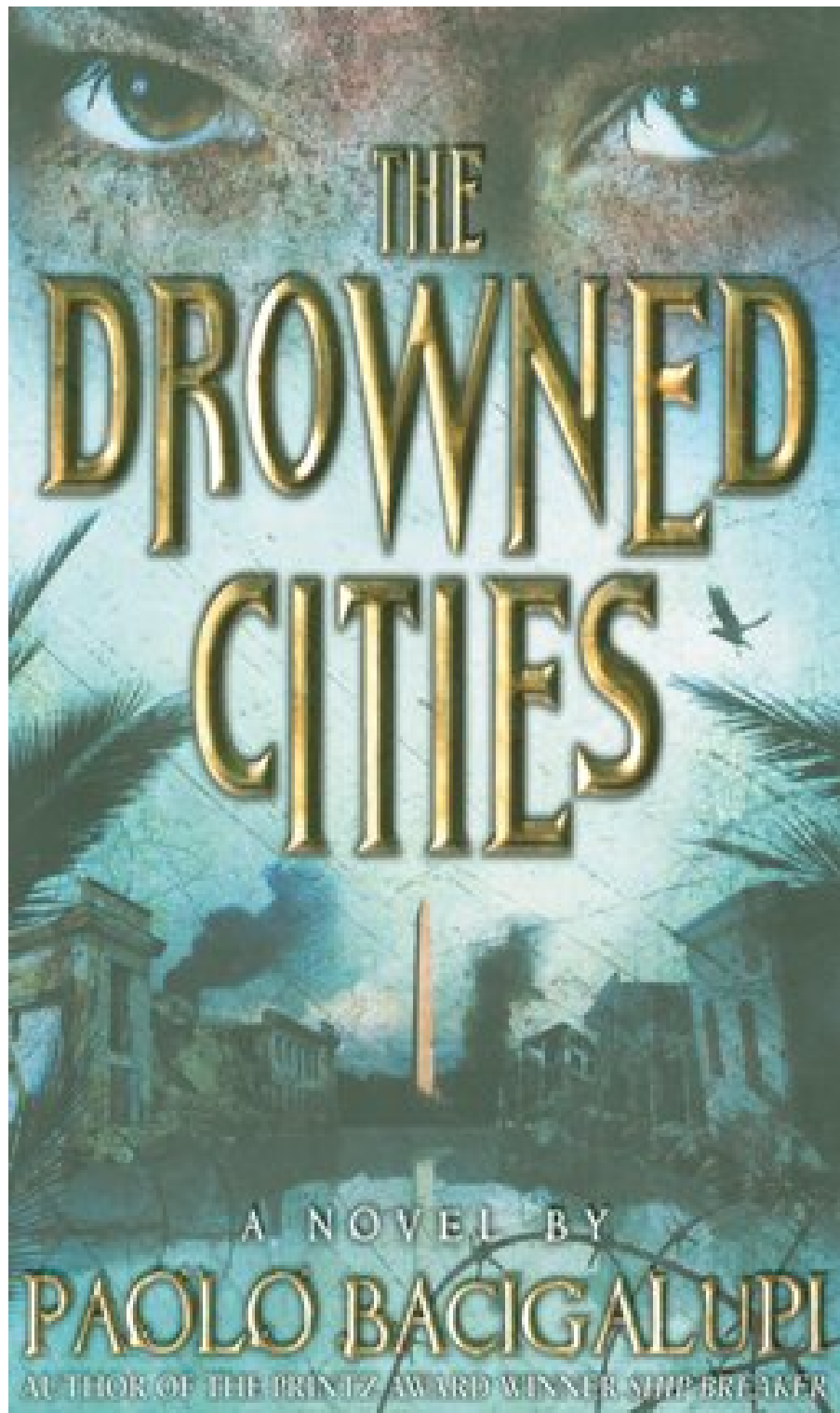


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# DROWNED CITIES BY PAOLO BACIGALUPI PDF

In a future America of unending civil wars, orphans Mahlia and Mouse's fragile safety is soon threatened and Mahlia risks everything to save Mouse.

- Sales Rank: #11940103 in Books
- Published on: 2012
- Binding: Library Binding

Most helpful customer reviews

64 of 70 people found the following review helpful.

If "Mockingjay" or Chaos Walking Trilogy are your favorite reads, "The Drowned Cities" is your next natural reading choice.

By Kindle Customer

"The Drowned Cities" predecessor (and loose companion) "Ship Breaker" has already won Printz and was short-listed for National Book Award, and rightfully so. But I am wondering right now - was it not a tad premature to give Paolo Bacigalupi all these accolades? Because, frankly, "The Drowned Cities" is a far superior novel in comparison and, I guess, it is hard to expect similar acknowledgment of it, even if it is deserved? It appears, most of these awards are given once and the awarded authors are then promptly ignored? I wouldn't want this novel to be overlooked.

"The Drowned Cities" is a completely different story from "Ship Breaker." Paolo's intent for "Ship Breaker" was to write a boy book, with action, adventure and explosions, and with a little bit of a moral lesson about bravery and loyalty. But I doubt "The Drowned Cities" was written with the same agenda in mind. Or if it was, the final novel far exceeded its original intent. "The Drowned Cities" is a heavy, brutal, unequivocally message-driven story that no one will dismiss as a simple entertainment.

This is a story of war. The kind of war that is playing out in many parts of our world right now. The setting of "The Drowned Cities" is futuristic/dystopian (slightly post-apocalyptic?) - natural resources are scarce, global warming has caused a climate change and extensive flooding of many parts of the planet, US is torn by civil war the reasons for which no one can any longer remember, China is a mega power that attempts to act as a peacekeeper, there are genetically augmented "people" who do rich men's bidding in all spheres of life from war combat to sexual services (this later "sphere" is not actually written into this YA novel, but a part of the larger "The Windup Girl" universe). But there is nothing in this fictional world that, on a human level, is not already happening in reality. And what is happening is that people are murdering each other for no good reason, children are being recruited to advance various war lords' convoluted political and financial agendas, livelihoods are being destroyed and citizens killed and exploited by the same soldiers who claim to protect and serve them.

Bacigalupi writes about many war-related things in this novel - the futility of peacekeeping efforts, the pointlessness of civil wars. It raises questions of what should one do in a time of war - fight and spread violence? endure and survive at any cost, even by sacrificing one's humanity? or try to simply escape? But the major theme of "The Drowned Cities," in my mind, is the place of children in war. They are its victims,

they are its bloody players, they are its survivors. The part of the story that struck me the most is the portrayal of the evolution (or birth) of a child soldier. This novel is awfully reminiscent of Ishmael Beah's personal account of becoming a boy soldier. It is astonishing how easy it is to dehumanize a child and make him (or her) a senseless torturer and killer.

Reading "The Drowned Cities" was an immensely intense experience for me. Every time I put the book down and came back to it later, it only took me a few pages to put me again and again into a high level of anxiety and fear for its characters. Not many YA books can keep me in suspense these days, but "The Drowned Cities" did. With that said, I want to assure you, the book never becomes a tearjerker or tragedy porn or shocking for the shock's sake. It is an honest, real and raw portrayal of what happens every day in the countries we don't care and don't want to think about.

If "Mockingjay" or Chaos Walking Trilogy are your favorite reads, "The Drowned Cities" is your next natural reading choice.

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

An incredible book, from start to finish!

By Amanda Welling

First Impressions: Paolo Bacigalupi's novel, Ship Breaker, was incredible! For anyone who has not already read the book, you are totally missing out! The Drowned Cities was high on my list of must-reads for this year since I loved the first book so much. This author has an amazing talent and I knew that he would be able to write a wonderful companion novel to Ship Breaker. I have to say that I think I like the cover art more on this book as well. Paolo really takes the dystopian genre to a whole new level!

First 50 Pages: I would be hesitant to suggest reading The Drowned Cities to a younger reader. This book like the last is dark and gritty all the way around. The setting is dark, there is some cursing and drug use, the characters are highly flawed, and there are some sexual bits thrown in for good measure. So if any of those things make you feel uncomfortable, you may want to pass on reading this book. However, what I love about this book is that it is plausible and the hope for the characters isn't completely lost even though the conditions everyone faces are extremely drab. You don't have to look very far to find all of the good messages this book contains.

Paolo's writing is fabulous as usual in The Drowned Cities, which for me, was expected. The pacing of the book seemed to run well, although I think that this book had much more action than the last. Just know that the author doesn't hold back when describing anything, so you get all of the dirty little details about everything gruesome and disgusting. I also think that both genders will love this book, as well as adult readers. I know that once I picked it up, it was so difficult to put back down. A lot of people felt that the first book was more geared towards boys, but I disagree. Girls like lots of action too!

Characters & Plot: The Drowned Cities takes place in an area that was formally known as Washington, DC and has two main characters, orphans Mahlia and Mouse. Washington, DC is hardly recognizable and it is one of the best aspects of this novel. The way that the author describes everything in great detail really makes the story come alive.

Mahlia is the daughter of a peacekeeper. When the peacekeepers came to the United States to try to end the civil war, they eventually abandoned the country and their attempt at peace failed. Mahlia ended up captured by a group called the Army of God who cut off one of her hands. Luckily for Mahlia, before this group could do any more damage to her, a boy named Mouse comes and rescues her. I was instantly able to connect with Mahlia and I felt horrible for her because of everything that she had to go through in order to survive.

Mouse is a boy whose parents died in the war and takes Mahlia into a refugee camp after her capture. If that wasn't interesting enough, things become even more intense when the United Patriot Front show up to track down a human called Tool, who had been genetically advanced to become the perfect soldier. Tool is indeed around the area and after a battle with the soldiers (who are all basically teens), Mahlia and Mouse take him under their wings because he is wounded. What happens next is a wild ride through the jungles of the Drowned Cities with a ton of action, and of course, more guts and gore.

Tool is the only character from Ship Breaker that shows up in The Drowned Cities, which is awesome because that means you really don't have to read Ship Breaker in order to understand what happens in this book, although the first book is really good, so you should read it before this one. One thing that I appreciated overall was the way each character changes from the beginning of the book until the end. Mouse makes the most obvious changes in my opinion. He wasn't my favorite character at first, but he was by the ending.

Final Thoughts: War takes center stage in The Drowned Cities and this book is sure to make you sit up and think about what you read long after you have finished reading. The effects of war, especially on children, are a major theme that runs through this story. War can make people change into something that they never thought they could be and morals can become questionable. Everything that you thought about how the world works becomes turned upside down. The war aspect of this book felt very real to me in a very creepy and powerful way.

I can't really recommend reading this book enough. It was superb and quite frankly, it was one of the most powerful and thought-provoking novels I have read ever. I foresee grand things in store for this author in the future!

19 of 22 people found the following review helpful.

uncomfortably real, and completely riveting

By Tabitha

Wow. Few authors can blow me away like Bacigalupi can. After I finished this book, I had to just sort of sit there catching my breath (I felt the same way after finishing Ship Breaker). Bacigalupi can \*go there\* like no other YA author I've read.

This book is brutal and no punches are pulled, but not in a gratuitous way. The violence is real and believable and absolutely necessary to the story. Actually, it IS the story.

This is a companion novel to Ship Breaker: America is no longer, and the east-central region is rife with civil war. There are several factions fighting for control, each calling themselves true patriots, but are really just warlords seeking power. Everything about it reminds me of certain areas of Africa, which made it real and extremely uncomfortable, and yet I couldn't stop reading.

Mahlia and Mouse have grown up in the Drowned Cities, which is the Washington D.C. area. They knew a short time of Peace when China intervenes in an attempt to end the fighting (and this reminds me of the Middle East). In the end, though, China pulls out and the fighting resumes as though it had never stopped. Ten years isn't long enough to erase animosity and hatred, real or imagined. Any semblance of peace is shattered, and soldiers go where they please, take whatever they want in the name of patriotism, and leave a path of destruction behind them. Mahlia and Mouse learned how to stay out of the soldiers' paths, but then Tool enters their lives.

Tool is the only character from Ship Breaker--half man, half animal hybrid of dog, hyena, tiger, and a few

other predators. He was built with one purpose in mind, to fight in a war. Mahlia and Tool find an unlikely alliance, and the story delves into themes of loyalty, friendship, family, and being forced into all of the above--like kidnapped children in Africa being forced to fight in a warlord's army. This is explored in full detail, along with the horrors of war, and my heart broke for Mahlia and Mouse.

At the same time, I cheered for Tool. In *Ship Breaker*, he discovers himself as an individual, which goes against his breeding and genetic engineering. In *Drowned Cities*, Tool discovers that he can have a purpose. He has an amazing revelation: "I have never been defeated, but have I ever won anything?" That really illustrates the difference between avoiding what you don't want and going after what you do want. Tool is such a fantastic character, and I can't wait to see what he'll do next. I am wondering if absolute power will corrupt absolutely.

If violence or war isn't your thing, then you won't enjoy *Drowned Cities*. But if you like stories with vast amounts of depth and emotion, then it's definitely for you. Definitely recommended. To get the full effect of Tool as a character, you should read *Ship Breaker* first. However, this book can be read on its own.

Age appropriateness: the realities of war are up front and center in this book, so it might be too much for younger teens.

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